

NUMBER I

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
ASSOCIATION
FOR PRESERVING
LIBERTY AND PROPERTY
AGAINST
REPUBLICANS AND LEVELLERS.

LONDON:

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ASSOCIATION
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*At a MEETING of GENTLEMEN at the CROWN AND
ANCHOR TAYERN, in the Strand, November 20, 1792,*

JOHN REEVES, Esq. in the Chair.

*The following CONSIDERATIONS and RESOLUTIONS were
entered into and agreed upon:*

CONSIDERING the danger to which the Publick Peace and Order are exposed by the circulating of mischievous Opinions, founded upon plausible but false reasoning; and that this circulation is principally carried on by the industry of Clubs and Societies of various denominations in many parts of the Kingdom:

It appears to us, That it is now become the duty of all Persons, who wish well to their Native Country, to endeavour, in their several neighbourhoods, to prevent the sad effects of such mischievous industry; and that it would greatly tend to promote these good endeavours, if Societies were formed in different parts of the Kingdom, whose object should be to support the Laws, to suppress seditious Publications, and to defend our Persons and Property against the innovations and depredations that seem to be threatened by those who maintain the mischievous opinions before alluded to.

These opinions are conveyed in the terms—*the Rights of Man—Liberty and Equality—No King—No Parliament*—and others of the like import; all of them, in the sense imposed on them, expressing sentiments in direct opposition to the Laws of this Land, and some of them such as are inconsistent with the well-being of Society under any laws whatsoever.

It appears to us, the tendency of these Opinions is, that we are voluntarily to surrender every thing we now possess; our Religion and our Laws; our civil Government and Civil Society; and that we are to trust to the formation of something New, upon the principles of Equality, and under the auspices of speculative men, who have conceived ideas of perfection that never yet were known in the World: And it appears, that the Missionaries of this Sect are aiming at effecting the Overthrow of the present System of Government and Society, by infusing into the minds of ignorant men causes of discontent adapted to their various stations: some of which causes are wholly imaginary, and the rest are such as inseparably belong to civil life; have existed, and ever will exist, under all Forms of Government; cannot be removed by any change, and will be aggravated and multiplied, a hundred fold, by the change proposed.

It appears from History and Observation, that the inequality of rank and fortune in this happy Country, is more the result of every man's own exertions, than of any controuling institution of the State. Men become great, who have greatly distinguished themselves by the application of talents natural or acquired. Men become rich, who have persevered with industry in the application to Trade and Commerce, to Manufactures, and other useful employments. How many persons now of great rank and fortune, who were born without either! How many rich Merchants and Traders who begun their career in the lowest employments of the shop and counting-house!

In the progress to this advancement they have all, in their stations, contributed their share towards the show of opulence, both publick and private, which is to be seen in every part of this Island. It is by the effects of this industry, that the Gentleman is enabled to support his rank and station; and the Merchant and Tradesman to employ his Clerks, Journeymen, and Apprentices. Hence comes the price of the Farmer's corn, and the wages of Servants of every description. By this happy *Inequality*, and dependence of one man on another, employment is found for all, in their several vocations to which they have been called by design or accident. This Inequality and dependence is so infinitely diversified in this country, that there is no place upon earth where there are so many ways, in which a man by his talents and industry may raise himself above his equals. This has hitherto been thought a pre-eminent happiness that was peculiar to ourselves, and ought to be cherished: it has been ascribed to the protecting influence which Property has always enjoyed under equal Laws; and it has increased of late

late years in a wonderful degree, by the prosperity which was caused, and can only be continued by the same influence.

We are, upon the fullest deliberation, of opinion, that proposing to pull down this goodly fabrick, which has been gradually reared by the successive virtue and industry of all the great and good men who have lived in this Island for centuries, and to submit to begin afresh upon a new system of *Equality*, as it is called, seems a proposition that can be suggested only by the most undisguised wickedness, and entertained by the grossest folly.

Because, if so wild a plan was to be carried into execution, and all men were made equal, they would from that moment begin to struggle, who should first rise above his equals; and it is beyond all question, if there was any industry, or any virtue; if there was peace, and publick prosperity; if there was private happiness and publick, in such new-formed Society, there would gradually arise an Inequality of Rank and Fortune.

We foresee, from recent experiment in a neighbouring country, that in the operation of bringing to pass such a transition, the lives and properties of all persons in this Island would be exposed to the arbitrary disposal of self-opinionated Philosophers, and a wild and needy Mob, deluded and instigated by them; that with the introduction of Equality in Rank and Fortune, an expectation would be raised in the Lower Orders, which must first be gratified with plunder, and afterwards would sink into a state of disappointment and abject poverty. When all were equalized, there would no longer be a superfluity to pay the hire of Servants, or purchase the productions of Art or Manufacture; no Commerce, no Credit; no resource for the active, but in robbery, and in all those publick disorders which make life miserable. Thus would the present generation be certainly ruined; that which is to follow could not propose to itself a remedy, but in pursuing the same Arts of Peace which had been so capriciously abandoned; and the more they prospered in that pursuit, the more they would contribute to reproduce the Inequality which had been before condemned and exploded.—Where then are the Blessings of this Reform, and to what purpose is misery to be brought on the present Generation?

It is with grief we see that in a neighbouring country the carrying into practice of this wild doctrine of *Equality* and the *Rights of Man*, has already produced these evils, and others ten thousand times greater. It is not yet publickly known, nor can it enter into the gentle heart of a BRITON to conceive, the number of atrocious crimes against God
and

and Man, that have been committed in support of these opinions. Murders and assassinations have been deliberately planned, and justified by some of these pretended philosophers, as the means to attain their ends of reform. With all their pretences and promises, they have proceeded to violate every right, Civil and Natural, that should have been observed towards their Equals;—the people, who have only changed their masters, groan under new tyrannies of which they never heard or dreamed; and are subjected to the chastisement of one desperate leader after another. The excesses of these ruffian Demagogues have no bounds; they have already surpassed the wildest phrenzies of Fanaticism, Superstition, and Enthusiasm; plundering and murdering at home, and propagating their opinions by the sword in foreign countries;—imposture, fallacy, falsehood, and bloodshed;—their philosophy is the idle talk of Schoolboys; and their actions are the savage ferociousness of wild beasts.

Such are the *new lights* and the *false philosophy* of our pretended Reformers, and such the effects they have produced, where, alone, they have unfortunately been tried. But, however these poor pretences may have imposed on the understandings of men, in a neighbouring country, bred in ignorance, oppression, and poverty, they can have no influence on the good sense and gravity of Britons, who have been used to the enjoyment of true Liberty, and every day feel the blessings of abundance derived from a productive industry, protected by Equal Laws, and a free Government. It is well known, that those who are virtuous and honest have many more means of acquiring ease and comfort, wealth and distinction, and in a superior degree, in this country than in any other;—it is well known, that we already possess, and have long possessed, really and truly That which the pretended Reformers would persuade ignorant people *they* alone can bestow. It has been the pride of BRITONS to boast of their *Liberty* and *Property*; and although these visionary Reformers have chosen to substitute the notion of *Equality* in the place of the latter, it is trusted there are enough who know too well the value of their *Property*, acquired under the influence of true Liberty, to surrender it in exchange for an empty name. It is well known, and we feel it daily, that we have as much of these pretended new inventions, as is necessary and convenient for a well-ordered Society. Every one has all the *Rights of Man* that leave him at liberty to do good to himself and his neighbour, and (what is worth considering) to protect his person and property against open or secret plunderers. He has as much of *Equality* as one man can possess without diminishing the
Equality

Equality of his neighbour. We are told by our Religion (for *We* have a Religion,) that we are *to do unto all men as we would that men should do unto us*; and this is realized to us by the firm administration of the Law; which suffers no injury to go without a remedy, and affords a remedy equally to the proudest and the poorest.

Such are *The Rights of Man*; such *The Liberty and Equality* which we have long enjoyed; under these we have lived and prospered, both in publick and private, beyond the example of any country: and to maintain them, as they are, unimpaired by the fancies of Pedant-Politicians, or the rude hands of Russian Levellers, every TRUE BRITON ought to shed his blood.

Impressed with these sentiments in favour of our happy Establishment, and alarmed by the mischievous endeavours, that are now using by wicked men, to mislead the uninformed, and to spirit up the discontented by furnishing them with plausible topicks, tending to the subversion of the State, and incompatible with all Government whatsoever:

We do, as private men, unconnected with any Party or description of persons at home, taking no concern in the struggles at this moment making abroad, but most seriously anxious to preserve the true Liberty, and unexampled prosperity we happily enjoy in this kingdom, think it expedient and necessary to form ourselves into an ASSOCIATION for the purpose of discouraging, in every way that lies in our power, the progress of such nefarious designs as are meditated by the wicked and senseless Reformers of the present time; and we do hereby resolve, and declare as follows:

FIRST—That the persons present at this Meeting do become a Society for discouraging and suppressing Seditious Publications, tending to disturb the Peace of this Kingdom, and for supporting a due execution of the Laws made for the protection of persons and property.

SECONDLY—That this Society do use its best endeavours occasionally to explain those topicks of publick discussion which have been so perverted by evil-designing men, and to shew, by irrefragable proof, that they are not applicable to the State of this Country, that they can produce no good, and certainly must produce great evil.

THIRDLY—That this Society will receive with great thanks all communications that shall be made to it for the above purposes.

FOURTHLY—That it be recommended to all those, who are friends to the Established Law, and to peaceable Society,

to form themselves, in their different neighbourhoods, into similar Societies for promoting the same laudable purposes.

FIFTHLY—That this Society do meet at this place or elsewhere, every TUESDAY, THURSDAY, and SATURDAY.

SIXTHLY—That these Considerations and Resolutions be printed in all the publick Papers, and otherwise circulated into all parts of the Kingdom.

By Order of the SOCIETY,
MOORE, *Secretary*.

N. B. All Letters and Communications are requested to be addressed to the Secretary at this place.

*At a MEETING of the SOCIETY at the CROWN
and ANCHOR TAVERN, November 24, 1792.*

JOHN REEVES, Esq. *in the Chair*.

UPON reading the CHARGE delivered by Mr. JUSTICE ASHURST to the Grand Jury in the Court of King's Bench this Term, it was resolved, That the same be immediately printed and distributed in various ways for the better instruction of all ranks of people in the value they ought to set upon the good laws and government delivered down to us by our ancestors.

The letters daily received from persons who are desirous of assisting the views of this Society, are very numerous, and contain many useful communications. The writers of them are entitled to every acknowledgement; such as require private answers shall receive them from the Secretary, and it will soon be seen what use is made of some of the communications.

The Gentlemen of this Society cannot refrain from announcing once more how happy they are to find the numbers of those increase, who come forward to support the design of their Institution.

In consequence of a wish expressed by many, that an opening should be given for persons of all sorts to declare their desire of supporting so good a cause, a book has been opened at the Crown and Anchor for names to be set down, and it is now earnestly wished that all persons favourable to the present design, will signify it by inserting their names in such book.

One of the duties this Society has imposed on itself is to encourage persons to form familiar Societies in different parts of the town. it is much to be wished that a Society were formed in the City of London, another in Westminster, and another in the Borough. When those great Societies were formed, it might be considered, and would be seen by the effect of them, whether it would be necessary to make smaller Societies around them, to assist and co-operate.

It should seem, that the business of such Societies should be conducted by a Committee, and that the Committee should be small, as better adapted for dispatch of business; for it should be remembered, that these are not open Societies for talk and debate, but for private consultation and real business. The society at large need not meet more than once a month, or once in two or three months, to audit the accounts, and see to the application of the money. The object of such Societies should be to check the circulation of seditious publications of all kinds, whether newspapers or pamphlets, or the invitations to club-meetings, by discovering and bringing to justice not only the authors and printers of them, but those who keep them in shops, or hawk them in the streets for sale; or, what is much worse, are employed in circulating them from house to house in any manner whatever.

SECONDLY, They should by reasoning, and by circulating cheap books and papers, endeavour to undeceive those poor people who have been misled by the infusion of opinions dangerous to their own welfare and that of the State.

THIRDLY, They should hold themselves in readiness to prevent or suppress tumults or riots, if necessary.

LASTLY, It should be a part of the original compact of every such Society, that in what they mean to do, they shall always act in subordination to the Magistrate and the Executive Government, and in their aid and support, and not otherwise.

The Society, after full consideration of the nature of private meetings, formed with a design to take cognizance of what is transacted by the Executive and Legislative Powers of the country, are of opinion, that all such meetings are irregular. Such distinct and unharmonized centers have the effect of intercepting and drawing around themselves some of that force, and confidence of the people, which should pass on to their only true center, the constituted Executive and Legislative Authorities of the State. But when such an irregularity has been once permitted,

mitted, and the balance of the system seems to be affected by it, the equilibrium perhaps cannot be more naturally restored, than by placing a counterpoise of the same sort on the other side.

Wicked men, by the means of Clubs and associations, have been spreading among the simple and ignorant, seditious opinions, destructive of good government, and the happiness of us all. Good men associate to counteract those evil designs, to support good government, and to continue to us our present happiness. To associate in the forms in which *they* do (as appears by their printed papers exhibited to this Society) is always seditious, and very often treasonable: they all appear to be offenders against the law. To meet, as is now proposed, for suppressing sedition, for propagating peaceable opinions, and for aiding the magistracy in subordination to the direction of the Magistrates—the law allows it, and the time requires it.

By Order of the Society,

JOHN MOORE, Secretary.

At a MEETING of the SOCIETY at the CROWN and ANCHOR TAVERN in the STRAND, November 29, 1792,

JOHN REEVES, Esq. *in the Chair.*

THE following Gentlemen are of the Committee for conducting the Business of this Society:

JOHN REEVES, Esq.

JOHN TOPHAM, Esq.

JOHN BOWLES, Esq.

JOHN ROBERTS, Esq.

ALEXANDER MAXWELL BENNET, Esq.

Mr. JOHN SEWELL.

PETER NOUAILLE, Esq.

THO. LAW, Esq.

Mr. JOHN SARGEAUNT.

JOHN THO. BATT, Esq.

Mr. GEO. POTTER.

CHA. TOWNSHEND, Esq.

Dr. HALIFAX.

Mr. ALEXANDER BRODIE.

Hon. G. HOBART.

THO. PLUMER, Esq.

C. YORKE, Esq.

GEORGE WARD, Esq.

W. DEVAYNES, Esq.

Resolved,

Resolved,
That this Committee do meet to-morrow, at twelve
o'clock, for the dispatch of business.

By Order of the Society,

JOHN MOORE, Secretary.

*At the CROWN and ANCHOR TAVERN in the
STRAND, November 30, 1792,*

AT a Meeting of the Committee of this SOCIETY,

JOHN REEVES, Esq. in the Chair.

Upon a view of the Considerations and Resolutions published by this Society, and in conformity to the Opinions and Declarations therein contained, This Committee do hereby declare, that they will endeavour, by the circulation of cheap Publications, or otherwise, to cause those topics of publick discussion, which have been lately perverted by evil-designing men, to be explained, for undeceiving and informing those persons who have been misled and deluded by specious reasonings and false representations; and that they will use their best endeavours, in aid and support of the Civil-Magistrates, to discourage and counteract all seditious Publications and attempts to disturb the Peace of the Kingdom.

In doing this, and in making the present declaration of their intention, they hope they shall induce others, who have the same wish with themselves to support the good Laws and Constitution of this Kingdom, and the Peace and Happiness of Society, to make similar exertions in their respective neighbourhoods for the like purposes. And it is further hoped, that by these means the Members of this Association will be better enabled, as it will become more particularly their duty, to assist in preserving publick order and tranquillity, in case of any attempt being made to disturb them.

Resolved,

That as a considerable pecuniary Fund will be necessary for carrying into effect the purposes of this Institution, the Committee will thankfully receive the voluntary Contributions of all those who are inclined to give their aid on the present occasion.

Resolved,

That Subscriptions be received by JOHN TOPHAM, Esq. the Treasurer, at his Chambers, in Grays Inn.

At the CROWN and ANCHOR, Strand ; and at the following Bankers :

Messrs. DRUMMOND and Co. Charing-Cross.

Messrs. CHILD and Co. Temple-Bar.

SMITH, PAINE and SMITH, Mansion-House-street.

CROFTS, DEVAYNES, and Co. Pall-mall.

RANSOM, MORELAND and HAMMERSLEY, Pall-mall.

VERE, LUCADOU, and Co. Lombard-street.

EDWARDS, SMITH, MIDDLETON and Co. Stratford-place.

NIBLETT and JELFE, Gloucester.

Messrs. OGDEN, Salisbury.

CAM, WHITEHEAD, and Co. Bath.

Sir W. FORBES and Co. Edinburgh.

Resolved,

That the Thanks of this Committee be given to JOHN REEVES, Esq. for the Zeal and Exertion which he has shewn in beginning and promoting this useful and well-timed Association.

JOHN REEVES, Chairman.

At the CROWN and ANCHOR TAVERN, in the STRAND, December 1, 1792.

AT a MEETING of the COMMITTEE,

JOHN REEVES, Esq. in the Chair.

Resolved,

That the Thanks of this Society be given to the Right Hon. the LORD MAYOR of LONDON, for his well-timed Activity and Exertion in Support of the Laws and Constitution.

This Society having been informed by S.W. Clayton, Esq. that an Institution upon the same Principles with this Association has been formed at Peckham, of which he is Chairman ;

Resolved,

Resolved,

That the Thanks of this Society be given him for this Communication, and that he be requested to continue his Correspondence.

JOHN REEVES, Chairman.

*At a MEETING of the COMMITTEE at the CROWN
and ANCHOR TAVERN, December 4, 1792.*

JOHN REEVES, Esq. in the Chair.

THE following Address to the Publick on the present alarming crisis having been read, moved, and seconded,

Resolved,

That the same be published in all the newspapers,

“ At a time when the recent exertions of Government
“ confirm the reality of those dangerous designs formed in
“ concert with persons in Foreign Parts, with a view to
“ subvert the Laws and Constitution of this Realm, and to
“ destroy all order and quiet therein—when there is every
“ reason to believe, that among the considerable numbers of
“ French lately arrived in this Metropolis, many of them
“ hold regular correspondence and communication with
“ various ill-disposed persons, in Clubs and other Meetings,
“ instituted for the express purpose of overturning the laws
“ and liberties of this Country ;—the Committee feel it to
“ be their duty to warn all good Citizens to be watchful,
“ and upon their guard, in order to detect and bring to
“ justice such persons, whether Foreigners or British subjects,
“ who appear to plot and contrive against the peace
“ and good order of this happy Country. And the
“ Committee therefore most earnestly recommend to all
“ Magistrates and others, as well in this metropolis and
“ its neighbourhood, as in the more distant parts of these
“ united kingdoms, a firm and vigilant exercise of their
“ duty, as Magistrates and as Citizens, in detecting and
“ bringing to justice all those whom they find offending in
“ the respects abovementioned.”

Resolved,

That This Committee, being persuaded that great mischief has been for some time past effected in this country by the circulation of Newspapers filled with *disloyalty and sedition,*

tion, the writers of which manifestly appear by their language to be in the pay of French emissaries, who wish to destroy our excellent Constitution, do earnestly recommend it to all good subjects, whether Masters of Private Families, or Keepers of Inns, Taverns, or Coffee-Houses, to discontinue and discourage the use and circulation of all such disloyal and seditious Newspapers.

Resolved,

That Sir JOSEPH ANDREWS, Bart. be added to this Committee.

JOHN REEVES, Esq. Chairman.

Crown and Anchor, December 6, 1792.

AT a SPECIAL MEETING of the COMMITTEE of this SOCIETY,

JOHN REEVES, Esq. in the Chair.

This Committee considering that the great mischief produced by seditious and treasonable Libels is chiefly effected by selling them in shops, hawking them in the streets, and giving them away; and considering that the venders and carriers of such publications are generally acquainted with their contents, and evil design and tendency;

Resolved,

That a caution be hereby given to all fellers of Newspapers, Newscarrers, persons delivering hand-bills for club-meetings and the like, that if such papers are seditious or treasonable, *they* are also guilty, equally with the original publisher, printer, or author; and that it becomes them seriously to consider what are the Newspapers, papers of invitation to clubs and other meetings, which they sell, carry, or distribute, and whether they are of a nature to bring upon *them* the penalties of the law.

It appearing to this Committee, that evil-designing men, industriously and maliciously using means and instruments never before resorted to in this Country for spreading pernicious opinions, have addressed themselves principally to the manufacturing and labouring classes of people, and by pamphlets, hand-bills, and various other devices, have endeavoured to prejudice the minds of those persons against the King and Constitution, deluding them with false expectations that their condition will be bettered by the subversion of

of

of all distinctions of rank and property, and the introduction of Equality in their stead : It is

Resolved,

That it be recommended to all Masters of Families, all Master-Manufacturers, Traders and Others, to use their best endeavours to undeceive and inform their servants, their journeymen, their apprentices, their neighbours, and all persons whom they find misled and corrupted by such inflammatory and seditious writings or language ; warning them, that if they maintain by word or by action treasonable and seditious principles, they will incur the penalties of the law ; and further instructing them, that none of the hopes so falsely and insidiously held out to them can be realized ; but that, on the contrary, such wicked attempts will tend to the destruction of all trade and manufactures, by which they are supported, when industrious ; and will destroy all the provision made for the poor, which they now enjoy, when they become unfit for labour.

Resolved,

That the following Opinions from the Commentaries of the excellent Mr. Justice Blackstone, vol. iv. chap. 9. be published for the information of the ignorant, and as a caution to the unwary.

“ If a party apprised of any treason does not, as soon as conveniently may be, reveal it to some judge of assize, or justice of the peace, he is guilty of *misprision of treason* ; which is punished by the loss of the profits of lands during life, forfeiture of goods, and imprisonment during life.

“ But if there be any probable circumstances of assent ; as if one goes to a treasonable meeting, knowing beforehand that a conspiracy is intended against the king ; or being in such company once by accident, and having heard such treasonable conspiracy, meets the same company again, and hears more of it, but conceals it ; this is an implied assent in law, and makes the concealer guilty of actual high treason.

“ Contempts and misprisions against the king’s *person* and *government* may be by speaking or writing against them, cursing or wishing him ill, giving out scandalous stories concerning him, or doing any thing that may tend to lessen him in the esteem of his subjects, may weaken his government, or may raise jealousies between him and his people. It has been also held an offence of this species to drink to the pious memory of a traitor ; these being acts which impliedly encourage Rebellion.

“ For

"For these species of contempt, a man may not only be
 "fined and imprisoned, but suffer the pillory, or other in-
 "famous corporal punishment."

This Committee, fully sensible of the many kind and in-
 teresting Communications which they continually receive
 from various quarters, return thanks to their Correspondents,
 whose hints will be thankfully received, and carefully at-
 tended to. In the mean time it is hoped that the variety of
 important business which occupies the Committee, will fur-
 nish an excuse for their not returning immediate answers to
 each letter which they may receive.

Books are opened at the Crown and Anchor for the Entry
 of Names, as well as the Receipt of Subscriptions.

N. B. All Communications to this Society are desired to
 be addressed to the Chairman at this place.



